Guidelines for Program Assessment Briefing Books
(May 9, 2003)

I. Introduction

The Toll Committee's report, '*Review and Recommendations: Sea Grant Program Evaluation Process*", made several recommendations related to the issue of the time spent in preparing for the Program Assessment Team (PAT) review and the excessive size of the briefing books prepared. Specifically, the recommendations were:

1. In preparing for the second round of Program Assessments, Sea Grant Directors should be encouraged to focus primarily on the program's accomplishments since the previous PAT evaluation. (Research that started earlier, but had impacts during this time, should be included.)

2. Sea Grant Directors should be encouraged to seek brevity in their briefing for the PAT review. The report need not be more than about 25 pages of text (not counting one-pagers and project phylogenies). They should present their accomplishments briefly, in a manner that is readily accessible. Information should be presented systematically to give a picture of the program as a whole. Summary data should be included on the number of pre-proposals, the review process, the number of reviewers, the number of projects funded, and the mean size of grants awarded. Brochures, booklets, newsletters, and other publications should be made available to the PAT during their visit and/or mailed to them separately ahead of the visit, but need not be included in the briefing books.

Based on these recommendations, guidelines were developed for a PAT briefing book that would meet the Toll Committee's recommendation of "brevity" and be focused on program performance since the previous Program Assessment. These guidelines were distributed to the Sea Grant Network for comment in March 2003. The Sea Grant Review Panel took the opportunity at their April 26, 2003 meeting to clarify the issue of length for the briefing books by passing unanimously the following resolution:

"The Panel places a premium on brevity with reports of 25 pages or less preferred; reports shall not exceed 35 pages, excluding an appendix of up to 10 pages including indicators and other issues of import at the option of the Sea Grant Program.

The following items may also be included as additional appendices and do not fall within the page limits. Once again, brevity is preferred.
*   – List of investigators/projects*
*   – List of publications*
*   – Strategic plan*
*   – Implementation plan*
*   – Specific responses to PAT chair requests for additional information*

Supplemental materials may be distributed at the review, but should not become part of the review material forwarded to the National Sea Grant Office."

The briefing book guidelines, presented below, were revised in response to the comments received and to be consistent with the Review Panel resolution. They provide opportunity for the Sea Grant Program to introduce itself to the PAT, discuss its response to the previous PAT review, and provide information on program accomplishments and impacts. In addition, the guidelines call for the Sea Grant Program to provide the PAT members information on a standard set of indicators of performance related to the four benchmark criteria – long range planning, program management, connecting with users, and producing significant results. The performance indicators in the guidelines were developed from the final report of the Metrics Committee, and they are a mix of quantitative and qualitative information. All programs are expected to provide information to the PATs on these indicators, and they may also choose to address any of the many others discussed in the Metrics Committee report. Possible formats for the indicators are suggested, but the information may be presented in any way that the program feels would be effective.

II. Content

The briefing book for a Sea Grant Program Assessment will be made available to the PAT prior to the on-site review in order to provide a focused overview of the program and its accomplishments. It is anticipated that additional information will be provided by the program during the PAT review. The briefing book should include the following information:

Section 1. Program Overview (25 pages or less preferred, maximum 35 pages)
   A. Program Introduction and Overview
   B. Response to Previous PAT Recommendations
   C. Program Accomplishments and Impacts – Impacts and results of program activities that have significant scientific, environmental, economic or social benefits. Impacts may involve behavioral, policy or economic changes and may impact individuals, businesses, and institutions. Seminal contributions to science are considered impacts especially if the research findings lead to major progress in a particular field, implementation of new technologies or have a substantive bearing on an economic or societal issue. While the focus should be on the time since the last PAT (five years for the second round of reviews, but normally four years), some important impacts are developed over the long term — both in the scientific arena and through sustained, integrated efforts by Sea Grant programs — and they may be presented in a variety of formats including phylogenies or portfolios.

Section 2. Appendices:
   A. Expected Indicators of Performance and Other Issues of Import (10 pages or less) – There is no standard or best format for presenting the indicators of performance. Some or all the indicators may be presented as part of the discussion in Section 1. An example of how the information might be presented within ten pages is included in the next section of these guidelines.
   B. List of Investigators/Projects
   C. List of Publications
   D. Strategic Plans (previous and current)
   E. Implementation Plans

III. Possible Format for *Appendix A. Expected Indicators of Performance and Other Issues of Import*

There are many ways that information regarding the expected indicators of performance can be presented in the briefing book and during the PAT review. The following outline is intended only to provide an example of how this information might be organized in the briefing book appendix; it is anticipated that the presentation will be tailored to suit the needs of each individual program.

I. Organizing and Managing the Program Indicators:

A. Leadership of the Program –
  1. *Management Team composition and responsibilities (0.5 page narrative / organization chart)*
  2. *Percentage time Director and staff devote to SG (FTEs)*
  3. *Advisory Boards membership and function (expertise, meeting schedule, recommendations) (0.5 page)*

B. Institutional Setting –
  1. *Setting of the program within the university or consortium organization and reporting structure (0.5 page wire diagram)*

C. Project Selection –
  1. *Brief description of the process used to develop RFP priorities (0.5 page)*
  2. *Number of Preproposals and Full Proposals submitted, and institutions represented / institutions available in state*

	1st Biennial Cycle	2nd Biennial Cycle	Total
Preproposals	#	#	#
Full Proposals	#	#	#
Institutions	#	#	#

  3. *Brief description of the review process including composition of review panels (0.5 page)*

D. Recruiting Talent –
  1. *New vs. continuing projects and PI's; Recruitment of PI's/institutions; Relative success of home institution; Success in national competitions Regional/multi-program projects*

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Total
New projects	#	#	#	#	#
Continuing projects	#	#	#	#	#
New PIs	#	#	#	#	#
Success of home institution	#	#	#	#	#
New institutions	#	#	#	#	#
Success in national competitions	%	%	%	%	%
Regional & multi-program projects	#	#	#	#	#

E. Integrated Program Components –
1. *Integration of outreach and research program elements (0.5 page)*
2. *Core Federal and matching funds and distribution among program elements over the last 8 years*

Year	SG	Match	Distribution (Research, Extension, Education, Communications, Program Development, Administration,)
Year 1	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 2	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 3	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 4	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 5	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 6	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 7	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$
Year 8	$	$	R= $ Ex=$ Ed=$ C=$ PD=$ A=$

3. *Leveraged funding from partners (NOAA, other Federal, State and local) for the program over the last 8 years*
4. *National competition funding (NSIs, pass through awards) over the last 8 years*
5. *Additional Program Funding through grants, contracts and development activities over the last 8 years*

II. Connecting Sea Grant with Users Indicators:

A. Engagement with Appropriate User Communities –
1. *Leadership by staff on boards and committees (0.5 page)*

B. Partnerships – (0.5 page)
1. *Effective local, regional and national interactions/collaborations including NOAA programs*
2. *Leveraged funding from partners (NOAA, other Federal, State and local) for the program*

III. Effective and Aggressive Long-Range Planning Indicators:

A. Strategic Planning Process - (1 page)
1. *Stakeholder and staff involvement (numbers and duration) and integration of input into planning*
2. *Evolution over time, selection process, and clear articulation of priorities*

B. Strategic Plan Quality -
1. *Short to long-term functional and management goals established (1 page)*

C. Implementation Plan – (1 page)
1. *Distribution of investment/effort to meet strategic plan priorities*
2. *Identification of short to long-term benchmarks*
3. *Work plan developed for integration of program elements*

IV. Producing Significant Results Indicators:

A. Contributions to Science and Technology –
1. *Number of publications (journal articles, book chapters, reports, etc.) (Publication list is a separate Appendix)*
2. *Invention disclosures and patents*

B. Contributions to Education and Outreach –

    1. *Numbers of graduate and undergraduate students supported, including fellowships and internships*

Students	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Undergraduate	#	#	#	#	#
Graduate	#	#	#	#	#

    2. *Sponsorship of education programs and target audience participation*
    3. *Number, list and diversity of products produced (print, audio, video, web, etc.)* (list of publications is attached as a separate appendix)
    4. *Internal evaluation processes for products and programs* (0.5 page)
    5. *Staff and product awards*

C. Impact on Society, the Economy, and the Environment – This element should make up the bulk of the discussion in Section 1 of the briefing book, but programs may wish to include additional information here.
    1. Descriptions of the most important impacts
    2. Positive environmental impacts and economic and social benefits resulting from changes in behavior of individuals, businesses, and institutions

D. Success in Achieving Planned Program Outcomes – There are no expected indicators for this element that need to be included in the appendix. Programs should address this element as part of Section 1 and/or during their PAT review.